



## **Child-care fee adjustments set for November**

**HEIDELBERG, GE**-The Installation Management Agency-Europe Morale, Welfare and Recreation Division has announced that Child and Youth Services program fee adjustments will take effect Nov. 1 for all communities in Europe.

CYS fees are reviewed annually in every program and category and adjusted to comply with the current Department of Defense Child Development Program fee ranges based on family income levels. This is only the second CYS fee increase in four years in IMA-EURO.

The fee adjustments are being made to ensure that child-care costs are equitable for all families based on total family income. This means that each family pays approximately the same percentage of its total family income, about 10 percent for full-day care. Only Category I families pay significantly less—about 8 percent of total family income for those families earning \$28,000 or less per year. The scale is based on total family income (including wages and allowances, but without cost-of-living allowance/post allowance), not on rank or grade. With the sliding scale-based fees and the cost of care subsidized by Congress, no family ever pays the full cost of child care or youth programs, regardless of which income category it falls under.

There will be no fee increase for Category 1 for either full-day child care or before- and after-school care. These families will continue to pay only \$196 per month for full-day child care and only \$120 per month for before- and after-school care. Category I full-day child-care fees are predetermined by the Department of Army, so lower-income families pay the same fee no matter where they are stationed.

Fee increases will range from 2 to 16 percent for full-day monthly child-care, and will be 6 to 10 percent for before- and after-school care for all other Family Income Categories II-VI (\$28,001 to \$70,000+ in total family income.)

In actual dollars per month for full-day child care, this is only \$10-\$36 more for the 44 percent of CYS customers who are in the middle-income categories II, III and IV (\$28,001 to \$55,000 in total family income.) These same families will see only a \$10-22 increase for before- and after-school care.

The greatest fee increase is actually less than \$.50 an hour, for Category V and VI families (\$55,001 to \$70,000+ in family income) who will see full-day rates rise \$64 and \$78.

CYS sports and fitness team fees are based on the costs to run each sport, and all patrons pay the same fees. Fees for soccer, flag football, cheerleading, baseball, softball, basketball and field hockey will go up \$6; tackle football, lacrosse and roller hockey programs will go up \$24 in all communities. Fees for sports such as competitive swimming and ice hockey are determined locally.

Numerous discounts continue to be available in CYS programs. The multiple-child discount of 10 percent for child care, school-age services and CYS team sports will remain in effect, and discounts for head coaches and parent/teen CYS volunteers will continue to be available in communities where approved by the local commander. The annual CYS registration fee of \$18 per child, or \$40 maximum per family, is standard Army-wide, valid for a 12-month period regardless of Army assignment or re-stationing.

In reality, CYS fees generally cover less than half the actual cost of Army child care provided to each child. Fees paid by families cover only the costs for salaries and training of 75 percent of the staff who work directly with children and youth; appropriated funds provided by Congress pay for all other costs, such as facilities, administration, equipment, supplies and food.

With 100 percent of Army child development and school-age centers in Europe continually working to maintain accreditation standards, Army families are assured of getting the best quality child care at a significantly reduced cost. In comparison, fewer than 10 percent of off-post centers in the United States are accredited, while costs for equivalent child care and youth programs are significantly higher—more than 100 percent in some areas.

With CYS fees in Europe equal to or below many stateside posts, many newly-arrived families here will be happy to see that child-care costs are actually less than where they were previously stationed. For example, fees for all income categories in Europe are less than those at Fort Lewis, Wash., so Stryker Brigade families arriving in Vilseck, Germany, will now save from \$16 to \$62 a month on full-day child care and \$30 to \$44 for before- and after-school care.

Army families in Europe pay considerably less for child care, particularly infant care, than the average family in the United States. An April 2006 report in “USA Today” stated that—according to a National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies study—while costs varied considerably by state, annual costs for full-time infant care can run as high as \$13,480. This is triple the average for CYS infant care fees in IMA-EURO. The average U.S. family spends almost 11 percent of their household income on infant care, greater than the IMA-EURO average of 10 percent. The NACCRA report also stated that for many families in the States, annual infant child-care costs are actually higher than annual household food costs.

For details on CYS fee adjustments, people should contact their local MWR Child and Youth Services Coordinator. Further information on IMA-EURO MWR in Europe is available at [www.mwr-europe.com](http://www.mwr-europe.com).

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